

In 2012, Côte d'Ivoire made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government adopted a National Action Plan targeting child trafficking, exploitation and labor; adopted an updated list of hazardous activities prohibited to children; hired 8,000 new teachers; launched a national awareness campaign targeting the worst forms of child labor; and began participating in a project to support the collection of nationally-representative survey data on child labor in cocoa growing areas of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. However, Côte d'Ivoire still lacks a compulsory education law and gaps remain in the enforcement of laws. Furthermore, there are no programs to assist children found in the worst forms of child labor in other types of agriculture besides cocoa, or in mining, domestic service, and commercial sexual exploitation. Throughout the reporting period, children continued to engage in hazardous work in agriculture. Such work occurred particularly on cocoa farms, sometimes under conditions of forced labor.

Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5-14 yrs.	39.8 (2,181,894)
Attending School	5-14 yrs.	53.6
Combining Work and School	7-14 yrs.	24.3
Primary Completion Rate		58.6

Sources:

Primary completion rate: Data from 2011, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.(1)

All other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from MICS3 Survey, 2006.(2)

Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Côte d'Ivoire are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, many of them in hazardous work in agriculture, particularly in the production of cocoa.(3-10) Children also labor in the production of grains, vegetables, and coffee, and reportedly work in the production of bananas, cotton, palm, papayas, pineapple, rice, and rubber.(10-14) Children working in agriculture in Côte d'Ivoire use dangerous tools such as machetes, carry heavy loads, and apply harmful pesticides.(6, 8, 12, 15, 16) In the cocoa sector alone, of the 819,921 children identified as working in the cocoa sector, 50.6 percent, or an estimated 414,778 children ages 5 to 17 reported injuries from dangerous activities according to a report by Tulane University



that assessed data collected during the 2008-2009 harvest season.(6, 7) A government report released in 2010 estimates that more than 30,000 children in Côte d'Ivoire are found in conditions of forced labor in rural areas.(17-19)

Ivorian girls as young as age 9 work as domestic servants, often for 12 to 14 hours per day. Some of these girls are subject to mistreatment, including beatings and sexual abuse.(12, 20-23) Some children in Cote d'Ivoire are also engaged in commercial sexual exploitation.(9, 12, 24) Others perform dangerous work in mining, particularly in gold and diamond mining, although evidence of this is limited.(9, 10, 14, 23, 25)

In return for education and food, some boys, known as *talibé*, are forced by their Koranic teachers to beg on the streets. These boys may work up to 10 hours per day.(26) Prior to the 2010-2011 civil unrest thousands of children worked on the street in urban centers, especially in Abidjan. Following the 2010-2011 civil unrest, the prevalence of street children increased due to the separation of children from their families.(10, 27, 28) Street children are forced to sleep on the street, where some children sell their bodies to survive.(9, 21, 23, 24, 28-30)

Trafficking of children within Côte d'Ivoire's borders is a problem. Boys are trafficked for agricultural labor (including on cocoa plantations) and to work in the service sector.(11, 13, 31, 32) Girls in particular are trafficked to work as domestic servants.(12, 33) Girls are also trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation after being promised work in bars and restaurants. Many of these girls are ages 15 and 16, but some are as young as age 10.(25, 34-36)

Cote d'Ivoire

Children from neighboring countries are also trafficked into Côte d'Ivoire. In particular, boys are trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire from Ghana, Mali, and Burkina Faso for agricultural labor, especially in cocoa production.(8, 13, 32, 37) Boys from Ghana and Guinea are trafficked for labor in the mining sector, and from Benin for work in construction. Girls from Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria are trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire for domestic labor, street vending, and commercial sexual exploitation.(13, 25, 38)

In the western region, instability from the 2010-2011 election continues to affect and displace populations, while access to basic services remains limited.(39-43) Some displaced children in western Cote d'Ivoire have become separated from their families, exposing them to extreme vulnerability and abuse.(44) During the reporting period, there were incidents of schools and hospitals occupied by government forces, and checkpoints were set up near primary schools, further exposing children to the risk of armed attack. Additionally, the UN's Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict noted in its annual report released on May 13, 2013, that four children between 14 and 16 years of age were present at army checkpoints in the towns of Mahapleu, Tai, and Duekuoe during 2012.(45) Limited evidence also indicates that children within Liberia's border region were recruited by armed rebel groups for cross-border raids into Cote d'Ivoire.(46) Despite continued problems, the situation continued to improve throughout the reporting period, as the number of displaced adults and children fell from 240,000 in January 2012 to 40,000 in January 2013. Public services continued to rebuild as the Government returned to the central northwest region of Cote d'Ivoire and began to revive the health and education sectors of the region.(39, 47, 48)

Access to quality education is a critical component in preventing the economic exploitation of children.(49) Violence in western Cote d'Ivoire affects children's access to education since many displaced children have lost the birth certificates and school booklets required for school admission and teachers have also been displaced. A recent report indicates that some parents in the western region are hesitant to send their children, particularly girls, to school for fear of exposing them to sexual abuse.(44) Closed roads and absent teachers have kept schools closed, and up to 150 schools destroyed or occupied during the conflict have yet to be repaired.(16, 50) Evidence also suggests that children in Cote d'Ivoire are physically and sexually abused at schools. Teachers reportedly demanded sexual favors from some students in exchange for grades or money.(10, 51-55) School-based violence discourages families from accessing

education for their children.(55) In addition to the lack of physical and psychological safety in schools, the country lacks the teaching staff and school buildings necessary to provide education for all children.(8, 56)

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Code sets the minimum age of employment at 14.(57) Children under age 18 are restricted from certain types of work in the agricultural, mining, transportation, commerce, and artisanal sectors.(4, 58, 59) In agriculture, this list includes applying chemicals and working with fertilizer; in mining, children are prohibited from crushing stone and working underground. Ivorian law further defines hazardous child labor as any type of labor that endangers the health or development of the child. The law establishes penalties for those who subject a child to such work, including the child's parents.(4, 58-60) In January 2012, Côte d'Ivoire updated its 2005 Hazardous Labor List to prohibit additional activities by children, including carrying heavy loads.(58) While Ivorian law explicitly applies to the informal sector, it does not extend to the self-employed, which may result in some children who work on the streets, in mining, and other sectors not covered by laws.(60, 61)

International Conventions and Selected Laws on Child Labor and Education

	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	No
	Free Public Education	Yes

Education is not made compulsory by law.(4, 61, 62) Although education is officially free, in practice, some parents are still required to pay fees for teachers' salaries and books.(5, 24, 63) For some schools, birth certificates are also a requirement for continued enrollment. Since many children do not have birth certificates, they are prevented from attending school.(10, 63) The absence of a compulsory educational requirement, along with the requirement by some schools for birth certificates and school-related fees, decreases the likelihood of children attending school and may increase their vulnerability to the worst forms of child labor.(4, 16) Reports indicate that children's school attendance has worsened during the 2010-2012 timeframe as the recent political crisis has decreased the ability of the majority of the nation's families to cover miscellaneous school fees, and many children lost their birth certificates or are now unable to obtain birth certificates due to the crisis.(16, 50, 63)

The minimum age for both voluntary and compulsory recruitment into the military is 18.(64) The Ivorian Constitution prohibits forced labor and slavery.(65) The Trafficking and Worst Forms of Child Labor Law extends this prohibition to include debt bondage or servitude and the sale or trafficking of children.(60) It calls for life imprisonment when trafficking or the worst forms of child labor results in the death of a child and introduces large fines and 10 to 20 years' imprisonment for the trafficking of a child. This law also prohibits all forms of prostitution, the use of children for illicit purposes, and the involvement of children in armed conflict.(60) Although the Trafficking and Worst Forms of Child Labor law was approved in 2010, the implementing decree for this law has yet to be adopted.(66)

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Enforcement

The Joint Ministerial Committee on the Fight against Trafficking, Exploitation, and Child Labor (CIM) serves as a coordination mechanism for combating the worst forms of child labor in Côte d'Ivoire. The CIM is chaired by the Minister of Employment, Social Affairs, and Professional Training, and it includes representatives from 13 ministries, including the Ministries of Justice; Interior; Education; Agriculture; and Family and Women.(21, 67, 68) The National Monitoring Committee for Actions to Fight against Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labor (CNS), headed by the First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire, oversees the Joint Ministerial Committee. The Joint Ministerial Committee and the National Monitoring Committee both conducted their first meetings on February 7, 2012, and continue to meet on a monthly basis.(67, 69, 70) The National Steering

Committee to Coordinate Actions to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor and the Cocoa Child Labor Task Force, under the Ministry of Labor, also play a role in national-level coordination against child labor.(23) Evidence indicates that the coordinating structures lack sufficient resources. In addition, although the structures maintain coordinated working groups, a number of NGOs continue to lack clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the CIM and the CNS, undermining effective coordination on the ground.(23, 71, 72)

The Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs, and Professional Training is responsible for enforcing labor laws.(9) The ministry employs 206 labor inspectors across 15 regional offices, 5 departmental offices, and eight units in Abidjan.(9) Twenty-five of the inspectors are focused on child labor.(21) Labor inspectors are trained to inspect all sectors and may conduct surprise inspections of any establishment.(57, 73) In order to ensure that work does not exceed the physical capacity of children, labor inspectors may require medical examinations.(57) The combined budget for the regional, departmental, and capitol offices, and the Ministry of Labor's Direction to Combat Child Labor in 2012 was \$588,566.(9) Statistics relating to the number of labor inspections conducted, violations cited, or fines collected for 2012 are currently unavailable.(9) A lack of sufficient staffing and funding, including for vehicles and fuel, hinders labor inspections. For example, only three inspection offices have vehicles, and no labor inspections are carried out in the agricultural sector.(9, 23, 73-75) The labor inspectorate also does not have a list of establishments subject to inspections.(75) The lack of inspections across all sectors in which children work, especially in agriculture, translates into a lack of enforcement of the laws designed to protect children from the worst forms of child labor.

The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior through the national police are responsible for enforcing criminal laws against child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, forced child labor, and the use of children in illicit activities.(9) In 2012, the Ministry of Justice organized training on child labor and how perpetrators can be prosecuted. The training was attended by child court judges, prosecutors, and social workers.(9) The Ministry of Interior's national police maintain an anti-trafficking unit, overseen by a police chief, that investigates cases of child trafficking.(9, 21) In 2012, the anti-trafficking unit was staffed with five police officers and two social workers. Five additional officers were hired in January 2013.(9) In 2012, the anti-trafficking unit investigated seven separate cases and arrested 11 individuals for child

Cote d'Ivoire

trafficking. Perpetrators from six of these cases were referred to the justice system for prosecution.(9) Three individuals in two separate cases were released on bail and three individuals were found not guilty. The fate of the children in these specific cases is unknown. Research indicates, however, that in 2012, 119 children were referred to NGOs for care, some of which were victims of trafficking.(9) Despite the hiring of additional officers and the provision of child labor training by the ministries involved, evidence indicates that the police are understaffed and lack resources and training.(9, 23) For example, the anti-trafficking unit has only two computers and one vehicle, which is unable to travel outside of Abidjan.(9) The ILO Committee of Experts and the UNHCR observe that there is weak enforcement of the laws, particularly those governing the worst forms of child labor and trafficking.(25)

In addition to the anti-trafficking unit, monitoring brigades, established as part of the CNS, also are responsible for trafficking investigations. These brigades, composed of security forces, are tasked with dismantling trafficking networks and rescuing exploited or trafficked children.(21) Since 2011, Côte d'Ivoire has also been in the process of organizing child protection committees.(6) These committees, intended to be implemented at the community level, will utilize a national Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS), which will enable communities to monitor, report on, and coordinate services for children in exploitative situations.(6, 21, 76-78) The CLMS remained under design in 2012. However, by July 2012, the Government had finalized data-based indicators for the monitoring system, created training documents, conducted trainings to support implementation of the system, and formed child labor monitoring committees at the departmental, prefectural, and village levels.(6, 21, 76-78)

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

On March 28, 2012, Côte d'Ivoire launched the National Action Plan Against Trafficking, Exploitation and Child labor (2012-2014).(79, 80) The plan's goals are to prevent children from involvement in trafficking and other worst forms of child labor, pursue the prosecution and punishment of offenders, and implement child labor monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.(78, 79) Although the change of several cabinet ministers delayed the launch of certain elements in the plan, many initiatives were funded and implemented during the reporting period, including the national awareness-raising campaigns and child labor trainings for magistrates.(9)

Some ministries maintain sector policies for combating the worst forms of child labor in particular sectors. The Ministry

of Agriculture maintains a program called Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Agriculture, which conducts awareness-raising campaigns and supports research on child labor in agriculture.(81) Likewise, the Ministry of Family, Women and Social Affairs has implemented actions under its National Action Plan for the Child (2008-2012). This plan calls for training of officials on issues related to child labor, increasing access to education, as well as conducting a campaign to increase the number of children with birth certificates.(82)

Child labor concerns have been integrated into the PRSP (2009-2012). Since the program began, the PRSP has conducted child labor awareness-raising campaigns and trained judicial and enforcement officers on child trafficking. In addition, the program has trained teachers on the negative impact of school violence, implemented school feeding programs, incorporated 22 Koranic schools into the national education system, increased access to birth registration to 400,000 children, mapped Cote d'Ivoire's child protection system, and provided direct assistance—including food and psycho-social assistance—to 15,000 orphans.(83, 84) Child labor concerns have also been integrated in a number of other national development agendas and policy documents, including the UN Development Assistance Framework (2009-2013), the Decent Work Program (2008-2013), and the Medium Term Plan of Actions for Education.(85-88)

In 2012, the First Lady of Cote d'Ivoire, Dominique Ouattara, signed a joint declaration with the First Lady of Burkina Faso to finalize an agreement against cross-border trafficking.(89, 90) Côte d'Ivoire also continued its commitment to the 2010 Declaration of Joint Action to Support the Implementation of the Harkin-Engel Protocol (2010 Declaration) and its accompanying Framework of Action.(91, 92) Under this 2010 Declaration, Côte d'Ivoire agreed to provide appropriate resources and coordinate with key stakeholders (including USDOL and the International Chocolate and Cocoa Industry) on efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-producing areas. As part of its commitments to this 2010 Declaration, Côte d'Ivoire is also taking steps to ensure that all project efforts implemented under the Framework align with its national action plans in order to promote coherence and sustainability.(78, 91, 92)

In 2012, the labor ministers of the 15 ECOWAS countries, including Cote d'Ivoire, adopted a regional action plan on child labor, especially the worst forms. The objective of the plan is to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in West Africa by 2015 and to continue to progress toward the total elimination of child labor.(93)

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In 2012, the Government of Cote d'Ivoire continued to provide funds and build its framework to combat child labor. In May 2012, the Minister of Agriculture launched the Council of Coffee and Cocoa Platform Public-Private Partnership, a framework for consultation and ongoing dialogue with those involved in the industry value chain. The framework aims to improve the sustainable development and the socioeconomic welfare of coffee and cocoa producers and their communities through improved productivity, and efforts to combat child labor.(66)

In September 2012, the National Supervisory Committee against Child Labor and the First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire launched a large-scale national awareness campaign against child labor. It also organized a workshop to build the capacity of representatives from all prefects to address child labor.(66, 78) The CIM, ILO, and UNICEF provided child labor training to 95 regional and local prefects.(90) The CIM, National Monitoring Committee, and the ILO trained 40 ministerial communication officials, as well as members of the CIM and their affiliates on child trafficking and the worst forms of child labor.(90)

In 2012, the Ministry of National Education allocated approximately \$10 million to equip 125 secondary schools and open 3,300 primary classes. Eight new secondary schools will be built or repaired and some 2.5 million school kits and free enrollment in primary public schools will be provided. In addition, 5,000 regular teachers and 3,000 contractual teachers have been hired to fill deficits.(66)

The Ministry of Family, Women and Social Children maintains a center in Abidjan to receive vulnerable children.(9, 21) In 2012, the center removed, cared for, and repatriated four victims of child trafficking from Benin and Burkina Faso. It also placed two children trafficked from Mali into foster care.(90)

The Government also participates in a 5-year UNICEF country program, which provides assistance to orphans and vulnerable children and support to the formal and non-formal education systems in Cote d'Ivoire.(27, 94)

Since July 2009, the Government has been implementing the "Self-Help Village" initiative to combat child labor in the cocoa sector. Activities include building schools and health centers, introducing income generating activities, and implementing a child labor monitoring system.(9, 24, 78, 95, 96) Each village service package is valued at \$60,000. In 2012, the Government provided medical services to 5,000 children and educational

benefits to 1,000 children and 500 adults.(9) During the reporting period, the Government transitioned ownership of the community centers, schools, and health facilities to eight of the 10 participating villages.(90)

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire participated in an 8-year, \$14.5 million USAID-funded project to strengthen cocoa-growing communities by expanding opportunities for youth through education. The program focused on youth leadership, basic education, and innovation.(97, 98)

Throughout 2012, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire continued to participate in a 4-year, \$7.95 million regional project funded by USDOL in 2009, which aims to reduce the worst forms of child labor in domestic service and commercial agriculture (cocoa and coffee) and to support efforts to develop an updated National Action Plan. This project will provide education services to 3,100 children in agriculture and 1,350 children in domestic service to prevent or withdraw children from the worst forms of child labor.(33) In 2012, the project also conducted multiple child labor-related capacity-building workshops for journalists and key government employees at the local and national levels.(66) The Government of Cote d'Ivoire likewise continued to participate in a \$5 million regional project, funded by USDOL in 2010, which provided livelihood services to the families of children rescued from the worst forms of child labor. In Côte d'Ivoire, the project aims to provide education services to more than 1,000 children working in agriculture services and to improve the livelihood opportunities of at least 1,000 families.(33, 95, 99) In 2012, in addition to providing 1,376 children with direct education services, the project conducted an awareness-raising campaign targeting the worst forms of child labor, including in the production of cocoa.(100) It also provided child labor training to magistrates, journalists, and regional directors of national education.

In 2012, USDOL funded a \$1.5 million study, to be conducted by the Payson Center at Tulane University, to support the collection of nationally representative survey data on child labor in cocoa-growing areas of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana.(78) As called for in the 2010 Declaration, the study will develop a baseline estimate of the number of children working in the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-growing areas and help assess the prevalence of the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-growing areas.(78)

Under the 2010 Declaration, USDOL committed \$10 million to a 4-year regional project to reduce the worst forms of child labor in cocoa-producing areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana by providing direct services to communities. In Côte d'Ivoire,

Cote d'Ivoire

the project aims to rescue more than 2,500 children and provide livelihood assistance to at least 1,000 families.(5, 91) In 2012, the project developed training manuals for child labor inspectors, conducted training on the worst forms of child labor for Ivorian labor inspectors, and provided training to employers and worker organizations on the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of interventions to reduce child labor in cocoa production.(101) As part of its commitment under the 2010 Declaration, the International Chocolate and Cocoa Industry committed \$2.25 million for a 4-year regional project that is assisting the Governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire to expand their CLMS and build the capacity of relevant stakeholders in cocoa-producing areas.(91, 92)

In coordination with the Government and its new National Action Plan, and in support of the 2010 Declaration, Mars, Nestle, Barry Callebaut, and Mondelez International provided additional funds for projects in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa-producing

areas. The projects aim to reduce the prevalence of child labor, including by improving children's access to education and the livelihoods of their households.(78, 92, 102) The funding provided under the 2010 Declaration by the cocoa industry is as follows: Mars, \$2.7 million; Nestle, \$1.5 million; Barry Callebaut, \$300,000; Mondelez International, \$1.54 million; and Global Issues Group, \$2.25 million.(78)

Although the Government of Côte d'Ivoire maintains programs and coordinates with industry, international organizations, NGOs, and other governments to help children on cocoa farms, such programs still do not reach the approximately 3,600 cocoa-growing communities reportedly in need of services.(6, 103) The Government also lacks sufficient programs, both in number and scope, to address the needs of children engaged in other types of agriculture, mining, and domestic service; former child soldiers, and children found in commercial sexual exploitation.

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in Côte d'Ivoire:

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Laws and Regulations	Make education compulsory and establish a minimum compulsory education age that is consistent with the minimum age for admission to work.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure that prohibitions against the worst forms of child labor extend to self-employed children.	2011, 2012
Coordination and Enforcement	Allocate sufficient resources to ensure the inspection and enforcement of child labor laws occur, particularly in sectors where the worst forms of child labor are most prevalent.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
	Systematically collect and make available data on child labor incidents, prosecutions, sentences, and referrals to remediation services for children rescued from the worst forms of child labor.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Expand the CLMS.	2011, 2012
	Ensure procedures are followed in order to protect children from being recruited into armed conflict.	2011, 2012
	Improve coordination between and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the CIM and CNS.	2012
Policies	Provide sufficient funding and expand activities for effective implementation of National Action Plans to combat the worst forms of child labor.	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

Area	Suggested Actions	Year(s) Action Recommended
Social Programs	Pilot and expand efforts to address the worst forms of child labor in commercial sexual exploitation, domestic service, and mining.	2010, 2011, 2012
	Ensure that children used by armed forces receive appropriate remediation programming.	2011, 2012
	Implement a national campaign to ensure children's safety in schools, and work with schools to abolish fees, especially those related to paying teachers' salaries.	2011, 2012
	Expand and improve all programming related to the worst forms of child labor by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing long-term sustainable child labor-monitoring and remediation models. Augmenting social, education, and livelihood programs; remediation; farmer training; and infrastructure improvements (e.g., schools). Tracking project interventions and making this information publicly available. Replicating and expanding throughout cocoa-growing and other agricultural areas successful project interventions to address exploitative child labor. 	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

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